Story Parables

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The Nile Mission Press.

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Story Parables.

The Robe of Er Rashid.

THEY say that long ago there was a king who reigned over a mighty kingdom: and all parts of his kingdom were subject to his rule, save only one far-off province, and this was instigated by a traitor into rebellion. Now the king sent many a proclamation of warning to this province, and all passed unheeded, and at last he sent his own son with one last message of mercy if the rebels would lay down their arms. But in place of this there rose up a fresh revolt, and in the midst of it the king's son was slain. And as he died, instead of wishing vengeance on his enemies, his message to his home was to ask that his death might be accounted as their death and that for his sake forgiveness might be accorded to those who would submit themselves in his name, and that then the blood that he shed might not be without avail.

And the king, by reason of the love and sorrow and pity that filled his heart, gave his seal that it should be as his son had desired, and he sent a messenger to the distant province to call certain of

the rebels to his capital, where they could be made to understand fully what had passed, and that they might, if they made their submission, be sent back to their own land as ambassadors, to bring others to submit to him.

Now among the first who were summoned was a band of four men, who were brought to the king's chief city. And his will was that they should remain a month, and at the end of that time should be brought before him to make their submission. And during the month they were to weave, each for himself, the jelab* in which to appear. Now this was no hard thing to them, for the great industry of their own land was weaving, and every lad learnt it in his father's house. And the order was given to the four, that because their plea for forgiveness was in the blood that the king's son had shed for them, therefore the robe on each one was to be white, with one broad crimson border around it.

So the four looms were set up, after the fashion of their country in the room where they lodged, and a mass of wool ready for weaving was brought to them—some of deep crimson and the rest as white as milk.

And that evening the four sat in consultation on their mat

* A long tunic reaching from shoulder to ankle.

under the arcade of their room, but the faces of three looked dark and displeased in the moonlight.

And the eldest of them, whose name was El Khrati,* said to the others, " O, my brothers, it is well that we should weave new robes in which to appear before the king and to own to him our submission, that it beseemeth us to make them after the fashion of our own country. And in our country, as ye know, we never wear crimson of this colour—it is outside our road—let us dye this white wool to the colours that are usual among us, then we shall be as ourselves, and not like strangers, when we go to appear before him. And as for the crimson, we will leave it out and lay it aside, we do not need it." And two of the other men agreed with his speech, and they took the crimson wool and hid it in a chest that stood in a corner of the room : only the youngest, whose name was Er Rashid,† did not help them and was silent, and remained pondering in his heart.

Now the next morning the men rose early and began dividing the white wool into five heaps, according to the five colours that they proposed to dye it, that is to say, lemon and orange and green and blue and deep purple. But Er. Rashid's face was pale, and

* El Khrati = He who is out of the road.
† Er Rashid = He who is rightly directed.

withal he came forward with a strong heart and said, " Give me first my part of the white wool ; I will not have it dyed ; I am going to weave my robe as the king commanded me." And he went to the chest, and took with reverent hand his portion of the crimson wool from its hiding place.

And El Khrati and the two others were exceedingly angry, and cursed him for a foreigner and a renegade ; but they could not force him to yield his portion, so they carried their own white wool to the dyers, and brought it back in two days time tinted to the colours of the Arch of the Prophet,* save only the crimson, and set it up on their looms. And in the meantime Er Rashid had woven the deep crimson border, and was working at the pure white texture that followed, and he bore in patience day by day their sneers and provocations and contempt, that only increased upon him as time went on. And in some strange way their hatred did not seem to touch him now, for as he wove his robe his heart was filled with love to the Prince who had pleaded for him in his hour of death, and this love overflowed in its turn to those who were hating him, so that he answered their scoffs with silence or with gentle words.

* The rainbow.

And in due time came the day when the four were summoned to appear before the king ; and the three elder men walked proudly through the streets in their jelabs of many colours, sure at heart that the king would be pleased that they had come to make their submission, and would notice the pains and skill they had displayed in the weaving of their garments. But the face of Er Rashid bore the look of one who sees things that are hidden from his brethren—and in truth with the eyes of his heart he saw nothing but the distant battlefield where the Prince lay dying, and pleading for him, and for his people ; and this seemed to him more present than ever, now that he wore his robe that spoke of the precious blood that had been shed.

And as the four stood side by side in front of the crowd that filled the audience chamber, a curtain was lifted and the king came in. And he looked at the four with a look that seemed to read their hearts, and he asked them, " Tell me, O my people, what is in your minds, as to this matter of the surrender of yourselves for which you have come from afar."

So El Khrati answered and said, " O king, we have no king but thee, and thy kingdom alone shall remain. We are in the way

of those who may have been rightly directed, and we have woven ourselves robes of fair colours wherein to appear before thee; therefore do we account ourselves to be submitted unto thee."

But the king answered, "Of a truth if ye and the house of your fathers had kept in the past all the laws of the kingdom, then might this submission have sufficed. But have ye forgotten that ye have sinned grievously? I hear nothing in your words that makes mention of the past."

Then El Khrati answered and said, "Of a truth we know that we have sinned; but thou art the merciful and compassionate one, and to thee do we come for help."

Then said the king, "My mercy and my compassion have chosen unto themselves a way in which the remembrance of your sin can be blotted out. It is through the blood that my son shed for your land. That blood cries to my heart for mercy and not for vengeance. You may not understand how this can be, but I tell you that the only way that you can come boldly thus into my presence is by the way that he has opened for you in his dying. Had you of a truth submitted unto me, you would of necessity have appeared before me in the manner that I have commanded,

and would have woven to yourselves the robes of crimson and white wherein to draw near. Where is then the submission of which we speak? I see neither the crimson nor the white save in the raiment of one of you"—and the king looked with love and tenderness at Er Rashid, and said to him, "Speak, O my son."

And Er Rashid answered, "O my Lord the King, I have nought to say; I am unworthy to come before thee—look not on me—look on this crimson that I bring as my plea, and in thy great city count my guilty past as the snowy whiteness for the sake of my son's blood. And send me back to my land to tell my brethren of the mercy thou hast shown us through him."

And the king answered, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt, thou hast brought me the plea that is above every plea. Go back with my authority to all who will submit at heart, and will take my way of mercy even as thou hast done." And then and there Er Rashid knelt before the king, and his face shone as the sun as he gave up his whole life to this new sacrifice, no matter what it might cost him.

But the other three stood by with looks of gloom and displeasure, and the king turned to them sadly and said, "I have

offered you my one way of mercy and I have no other to offer, and ye have added now to your sins this blackest sin of all, that ye have set at nought my son, and have trampled in your hearts on the blood that he shed for you. Your beautiful garments can avail you nothing, for there is in them no mention of that blood, and your submission is but in word, while ye refuse the mark of submission that I have appointed. You have failed in my test. You have sent your own punishment before your face, and it awaits you." And the king signed to his jailer to lead them away into the prison house till the day of judging should come.

O our brethren the Moslems, you bear a beautiful name; that is to say, you call yourselves the submitted ones to the most High God. But we would ask you, does your submission resemble that of El Khrati or that of Er Rashid? That is to say, do ye submit yourselves on your own terms to God, or on the terms that He has made?

Now the terms on which you make your submission to God seem to us to resemble those of El Khrati; for you come to God the Most High with the robes that you have woven; and the five colours of the robes, so to speak, are the good works of Prayer

and Fasting. and Alms and Pilgrimage, and the witness. These robes are, so to speak, the fashion of your people, and that to which you are accustomed. And in all these good deeds with which you account to draw near to God and make your submission to Him, there is no mention of the sins that you have sinned, nor of any need of an atonement and reconciliation with God the Most High King.

But God throughout the history of the world has told us that where there has been sin there is no way of access to Him but through the way of atonement, that is, the death of an innocent one being accounted as the death of the guilty ; and thus when Cain and Abel brought their offerings in the early time, the offering of Abel was accepted, and not the offering of Cain ; and after that, in the Tourat, God spoke by Moses, and said these words, " It is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," and therefore was a daily sacrifice offered. And all this was to point forward to the time when our Lord the Christ should come from Heaven, the descended One, and He laid down His life for us and poured out His blood for us, as it is told in the Holy Gospel. Thus He fulfilled all sacrifices by this one last and eternal sacrifice, and made the way

of reconciliation between God and man, and He has risen from the dead and stands at God's right hand to plead for those who come to God by Him.

But the House of Islam, like El Khrati and the friends who held with him, leave out all mention of this Blood of Christ's Sacrifice, and will have none of it, and hide from sight the record of His death and deny it ; and woe unto them in the day when they shall find that this atonement of His death is their only plea before God, and that they have rejected it, and that while in name they have been the submitted ones, in truth they have been rebels before Him, for they have refused His terms of mercy through our Lord the Christ.

And therefore we pray you, O our brethren, to open your eyes and see whether this rejection of the atonement of Christ is leading you, and take the path of Er Rashid, and dare to separate yourselves from the rejectors and follow the way of access that God has appointed you ; that is to say, abandon the plea of your good works and open your hearts to Christ the Mediator and trust in the Blood that He has shed for you in His death, that it may be your plea for forgiveness and your means of reconciliation to God, and come to Him as Er Rashid came to the king, asking Him to look on the

Blood that was shed for you, and to count your guilty past as whiteness for the sake of Christ the Lord. So will you find a wellspring of purity and love spring up within your hearts, and all your longing will be to go back to your friends, and tell them of the love and pity that redeemed you, and bring them with you in the last great day as those who submit themselves, not in name but in truth.

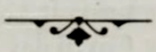
Hear now God's words concerning Jesus Christ our Lord.

"HE HATH MADE PEACE BY THE BLOOD OF HIS CROSS."

"IN WHOM WE HAVE REDEMPTION THROUGH HIS BLOOD, THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS, ACCORDING TO THE RICHES OF HIS GRACE."

"WITHOUT SHEDDING OF BLOOD THERE IS NO REMISSION."

And may God bless you, O our brothers, and open your eyes that ye may see, before His day of grace comes to its waning."



The Weaving of Saïd, the Silk Weaver.

Written in Arabic by Miss I. Lilias Trotter and printed at the Nile Mission Press.

" In the Name of God, the Compassionate and Merciful."

THERE was in time past a man whose name was Saïd, the Silkweaver, and he frequented the sons of wickedness, and entered with them into a conspiracy to kill the king of the country. And in the end the king learnt of the matter, and imprisoned them and sentenced them to death. But the heart of the king had pity on Saïd, because he was still young, and it seemed to the king that this treachery was none of his devising, and Saïd cried for mercy from the hand of the king. And the next morning the king called for him and said, " O Saïd, I have found thee a way that shall be to thee a means of saving thee. I have heard that thy trade is that of silk weaving, and I will that thou dost work me a beautiful girdle, and I will measure by its beauty thy repentance from this crime, and it shall be to thee a cause of my having compassion on thee ; but on the fourth day thou must bring it to me."

When Saïd heard the words of the king he could have flown with joy, and he returned to the prison, and the king sent him the loom and silks of all colours, and Saïd set up the loom in the court of the prison, and began to work a pattern of great beauty, and slept in peace.

But when he rose in the morning and began to work, the work became before him as darkness, for he saw two holes burnt in the girdle and other places singed, and Saïd understood, without anyone telling him, that this misfortune came from the hand of his enemies, that is to say, from the wicked friends who had incited him to crime, and who envied him when the king made him a means of escape, and for this cause they had burnt his work with matches while he slept. With vexation in his heart, Saïd began another piece, and put his might into it, and in the evening he ate his supper of bread and olives, and gathered up the crumbs and spread his mat whereon he slept, and went on to work again till the night fell.

And the whole night he was restless and watching against the enemies.

And when the day rose he looked at his work and found a new misfortune, that is that all that he had worked in the night had come

out soiled, for in his haste he had forgotten to wash his hands when he began to work.

And Saïd's face became pale (lit. yellow) with fear, for he thought on the time, that is, that the morrow was the limit given him by the king, and also he feared for the silk that it would not suffice him.

That morning there came in the son of the king to see the prisoners, and his eyes fell on Saïd, and seeing him troubled and pale he said to him " What hast thou, O man, that thy colour has changed ? " And Saïd told him of the affair of the girdle, how it had been arranged with the king, and what had happened to him with it, and Saïd said to the king's son :—" O Sir, I know that the king has but one word, and he wishes to see, by the work of the girdle and its beauty, my repentance ; and to-morrow of necessity I must bring it before him, and thou seest what has happened to me, Sir, and this is the cause of my misery." And the king's son looked on him with eyes of pity and compassion, and said to him, " Fear not, I will make thee a means (of escape) if God will."

But Saïd's heart would not leave him in peace, and he did not understand how the king's son could help him, and the whole day

he worked at a new girdle ; then through the whole night he worked till near dawn, and at that hour sleep conquered him. And when he rose to examine his work he found that the girdle was still short, and only a very little silk remained to him, for he had wasted much, and above that, he found that he had mistaken, in the light of the lamp, between the red and the pink, and all that he had worked in the night was spoilt and mixed. At last Saïd's heart was stifled, and hope was cut off from his life, for how could he show this girdle to the king, and there remained to him neither time nor silk to work another, and he knew himself as dead.

But there was a way of escape for him that as yet was hidden from him, and this was it. The king's son had gone out with his heart full of compassion for Saïd, and he had said in himself, "I will *advise my head** concerning this girdle that Saïd can do nothing with." And he put on a weaver's dress, and went to their quarter, and borrowed the use of a loom, and worked the whole day and the whole night, for all trades were known to him, and as for the girdle that he worked, none was like it on the face of the earth for beauty. And it came to pass, that in the moment when poor Saïd waited for the soldiers to lead him to the house of judgment, the door of the

* An Oriental phrase for "consider the matter."

prison opened, and the king's son entered and stood before Saïd, and said to him: "Oh my brother, shew me thy work." And when Saïd heard this he fell on his face before the king's son, and shewed him the three spoilt pieces, and said to him:—"Sir, thou seest the three pieces all spoilt; I have wasted all the silk in vain, and there is only death before me." But the king's son said to him, "Open thine eyes." And Saïd lifted his head to see, and the king's son opened the girdle that he had wrought in its length, and said to him, "Be not anxious or fearful—Offer this girdle to the king with a quiet heart." And the king's son told him what he had done for his sake, and Saïd was astonished, and his heart was filled with such love for the king's son, as he had never felt. And when the soldiers came to lead away Saïd, he threw his own pieces on the ground, and took up the girdle of the king's son, and the king's son went with him. And Saïd confessed before the king what had befallen him over the work that he had spoilt altogether, and told him of the wonderful goodness and love of his son, who had saved him in the moment when only death appeared before him. And, after these words, Saïd arose and opened the girdle before the king, and the king looked on his son and smiled on him, and looked on Saïd and

smiled on him also, and said to him, " Oh Saïd, thou art pardoned and accepted for the sake of my son ; from henceforth sin no more." And Saïd went free to his house, and all his life long he brought all his best work to the palace, to show by it the praise and the love that filled his heart towards the king and his son.

THE INTERPRETATION.

Oh my brother, this world is like the prison wherein was Saïd, and thou art, so to speak, attempting to weave good works that thou canst offer to God, that he may forgive thee and accept thee. And thou art troubling thyself much to work this work, but all that thou dost work becomes spoilt. Satan is thy cunning enemy, and he knows how to come to thee secretly with the lighted matches of his temptations, and even in the mosque while thou art praying, he knows how to light within thee these temptations, and make sin look beautiful to thee, and thy weaving becomes singed and burnt. But thy faults are not all on the head of Satan. Thy heart itself is defiled with sin, and thy defilement comes forth from it as it is written in the Gospel :—" From within, from the heart of man,

proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murders, thefts, coveteousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." My brother, last Ramadhan thou didst fast with thy lips, no doubt, but how many of these uncleannesses came forth from thy heart, and defiled the days of the fast, as it happened to Saïd and his work in the parable. Also, he made mistakes in his work because of the darkness, and the mistakes came not to his knowledge until the dawn, and thus, my brother, there are in thy life mistakes without number whercin as yet thou hast seen no fault because of the darkness that is on thy conscience, but in the light of the day of judgment, all the faults of thy works will appear, and thou wilt see that they are useless, and thou wilt be ashamed to present them to God, and He Himself warns thee already of this, for He says in His word that "all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" before Him.

And if thou dost become afraid of thy state, and of the time that is approaching, I have come to bring thee good tidings. As the king's son had pity on Saïd, thus Jesus Christ has had pity on thee; and He left heaven and clothed Himself with the form of man, and came to earth and worked works which were perfect

before God, beyond what tongue can describe for perfection. If He had been only a man, these deeds could not have been reckoned to thee, but in Jesus Christ, God was manifested in the flesh of man, and because of this, He could bear on Him the punishment of thy faults, and count to thee His righteousness, as it is written of Him in the Gospel that God " made Him to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

Oh my brother, cast away from thee all trust in thy good works, as Saïd threw on the ground all the pieces that he had worked, and confess to God that thou art full of sin, and dost deserve only the punishment of the fire ; and, as Saïd took up the girdle that the king's son had worked, thus take, with joy and praise, the perfect and complete work of Jesus Christ, and present it to God, to be to thee the means of salvation. And in that hour God will look no more on thy sins, but He will look on Jesus Christ, and receive thee for His sake. And with this wonderful deliverance there will awake in thy heart a new life, and thy good works will become therewith new works, and their purpose will not be to win thereby pardon, but to praise thereby to the glory of God, and of Jesus Christ, who has wrought for thee salvation. Amen.

The Blood Feud of El Hanouchi.

THERE lived in a village in the edge of the hills a lad named Mustapha. He was an orphan and lonely, for his father and others of his relations had been killed in a blood feud with a neighbouring tribe, and he knew well that as soon as he came to be master of a beard, his own life would be sought, but he feared not, for he said, " I will advise my head, and take care of myself."

One day, when he was coming back from his work in the field, he was saluted by a stranger of full age and well dressed, who asked him of his welfare, and spoke to him in a kindly fashion. He answered in simplicity, and was pleased, for strangers seldom come that way. A few days after the same stranger met him outside the village, and saluted him with friendliness, and said to him, " I have come from afar, but I have known thy father's family for years, and have rendered many services to the people of thy house : and now I hear that thou art a grown man, and also that thou art a fine man and intelligent, and I wish to seek thee in case I might be of use likewise to thee in the world, for thou dost waste thy years in this village,

where nothing is to be seen but the fields, and nothing to be gained beyond figs and bishna." Now this flattered Mustapha much, and when the man asked him to come with him to the Gargoutier for a meal, he followed him willingly. And the sky had not yet turned golden, and not many people were about ; but there was an old man in the corner of the gargoutier's shop who watched with anxiety the two talking over their meal. When the stranger had paid for their food, and Mustapha had thanked him and wished him well, he departed, and Mustapha lingered at the door looking after him, rejoicing over the good chances that might be coming to him, till the work of hoeing in the fields seemed tasteless. And thus he stood gazing down the road till the stranger was out of sight. When he had disappeared in the distance, the old man, whose name was Si Boualem, came cautiously from the corner, and said, " Came with me, my son, I have a tale to tell thee." Now the lad was not inclined for work, so went gladly and sat with Si Boualem under a clump of olives outside the village. And the old man said in a low voice : " O my son, beware of the one with whom thon hast been speaking. He belongs to the tribe of El Hanouchi, which has vowed vengeance on thee and on thy father's house, and it will be

with no good intent that he makes thee a show of friendship. Once he has thrown his glance on thee, he will leave thee never more till he has worked thy death. It may be he will not dare to assault thee pnblicly, but he will seek to beguile thee into some side path where he will slay thee in secret."

And Mustapha found his heart tormented by these words, for already the poison of the stranger's flattery had begun to work in him and to blind his eyes to fear: and it was only when Si Boualem had talked long and earnestly that he began to awake from the dreams of pleasure and gain that were laying hold of him and to see his danger: and at last he said: "Good, I will take care if he comes again."

But Si Boualem said: "O my son, thy care of thyself will not suffice to save thy head, for El Hanouchi is full of cunning and power, and he can work on thee till thou dost follow him as a sheep to the slaughter. There is one way of safety, and I will tell it thee. Thou seest the mountains far away to the East: up there, out of sight, lies the town of El Melja. The Prince of that town has been all his days the friend of thy father's house: he intervened for him in the feud, and by so doing drew on himself

the utmost wrath of the family of El Hanouchi, insomuch that they set on him with the intent to kill him : and now the edict has gone out from the government that all the Hanouchis are banished from El Meljn, and they dare not set foot in it. If thou canst escape there, O my son, the enemy cannot touch a hair of thy head. Be advised, and haste thee there before he comes again : Go in peace."

Then there followed days when the mind of Mustapha was much perplexed, for others also warned him that El Hanouchi had been seen around and was watching how to entrap him, and yet his heart would not give him the needs-be of seeking refuge among strangers in a strange place, for he clung to his village.

So passed some weeks, and he heard no more. But one day, as he went by the village café, he noticed El Hanouchi sitting at the door, and they saluted each other : and, looking round to make sure that they were not being watched, El Hanouchi signed to Mustapha that he had something to say to him. For a moment curiosity and fear were side by side in the boy's heart, but curiosity conquered him, and they went up the road together. Then said El Hanouchi : " I know that many fools in yonder village have warned thee against me, but I will prove once for all that my intent

is only good. Thou art the master of an arm and canst help me, and it will be well worth thy while. Up in the edge of the forest yonder I have found a matmour of olden days, and in it already I have come on treasure; if thou wilt help me dig further, half that we find shall be thine." The bait was too tempting, both for the sake of the gain and the adventure, for they planned to start as soon as the moon should rise, which would be at two o'clock in the night, that they might work as much as possible before the world should be awake: and the lad went to the baths to sleep, that he might slip out unnoticed.

They met on the edge of the forest, and by moonrise found the hole of the matmour, and Mustapha went down into it and El Hanouchi after him. The lad began to feel a little anxious, for there were no signs of tools or marks of any previous digging, and he suddenly felt how easy it would be for his enemy to kill him and bury him there. Looking up, he saw an evil glitter in El Hanouchi's eyes, and his heart sprang in terror. Just then from far down the road there came the sound of an old voice singing, and Mustapha recognized the voice of Si Boualem, and, before El Hanouchi could stop him, he had lept up to the level ground

and raced to his friend. " Praise be to God," said Si Boualem under his breath : " Come off with me with all speed " : and they went back to the edge of the village in silence.

Then spake Mustapha : " O my friend, how came it that thou didst follow me in the night ? " And Si Boualem answered, " I, too, was sleeping in the baths, and thou wert tossing and talking in thy sleep, and I gathered that El Hanouchi was after thee, for I knew that he had been seen yesterday. And while I waited thou didst rise and go out, and, by the mercy of God I followed thee . . . else wert thou by now a dead man. And now, O my son, believe my words, there is an evil, even unto death, planned for thee, and El Hanouchi's thirst for thy blood will not be quenched until he has shed it. Even now, while he is still in hiding, flee to El Melja, stay not to bid farewell to thy house, take the way of the East . . . the morning star will show it thee . . . seek not to keep to the high roads for the sake of ease, but go straight across country without swerving : salute no man, and hold thy way with the one purpose of getting there before he finds thee : once within the city gate he can touch thee no more." And Mustapha bade farewell with a full heart to Si Boualem, for he knew that his words

were truth, and Si Boualem watched him dive into the underwood and disappear.

Now time fails to follow the steps of his three days' journey, and in truth nothing special happened to hinder him, for he followed the old man's counsel and kept his way straight, and as far as might be from the dwellings or the roads of man.

And in the evening of the second day he saw in the distance the walls of El Melja lit up in the gold of sunset, and he knew that during the night he could reach it. But he knew also that this last night would be the time of the greatest danger, for that if El Hanouchi knew of his intentions, he could well by now be watching round the gate.

And so in truth it happened. For when dawn broke Mustapha was nearing the city, and he knew that at sunrise the gates would be opened. And just as the sun rose in glory behind the houses he could see in the distance that the gates were flung wide, as though in welcome. But in that very moment as he passed near the last cluster of bushes on the hillside there darted from them the form of his enemy. The lad ran like the wind, and El Hanouchi behind him : and round the gates the watchmen gathered with an eager

longing that the boy should win, and among them stood the Prince.

And at last, as Mustapha neared the gate there were but a few metres between him and his enemy, and El Hanouchi drew his long knife and hurled it at his head. But as it whistled through the air, Mustapha bent himself low, and it flew over him harmlessly, and in another moment, bowed to the ground, and almost fainting, he flung himself across the threshold of the gate, and the Prince stooped and lifted him with his own hand, and drew him in. And, with a look of passionate hatred and disappointment, El Hanouchi turned on his heel and fled down the hillside. And the Prince, speaking to the watchmen, said, " I know this lad, and I know his enemy, rejoice with me that he is safe." And a great rest of body and spirit came to Mustapha, for he knew that the haven was reached, and all he had to do was to there abide, for never could El Hanouchi enter within those walls, nor face the Prince who ruled there.

. . . . . .

My brother, there is one who has had a blood feud with the human race from the days of our father Adam until now, and

not only with the human race as a whole, but with each member of it. And he hates thee with a hatred that is like a thirst for thy blood : this enemy is the devil, therefore fear him and his wiles.

But to fear him will not be enough to deliver thee, for he has a cunning and a perseverance which are far above thy head, and thou knowest not at what corner of thy life's path he may lie in wait for thy eternal ruin.

Therefore we come to warn thee that there is only one place where thou canst find a refuge. We tell thee, in the words of the Prophet Isaiah, " We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks " ; and Christ the Lord says, " I am the Door, by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved." And the meaning of this is, that when a man has learned to fear Satan, the accursed one, it is not in doing battle with him that he can eacape, but in fleeing to Christ the Lord, and casting himself on Him, to receive him and keep him ; for God has given into His hand this right to receive sinners, and to keep them safe, and He has said of all who come to Him, " I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of My hand."

And this door does not only mean the door of Heaven, it means

shelter which begins here and now. Therefore turn thy face to Christ. O my brother, and flee to Him as for thy life. No matter if thou must forsake all that thou hast in seeking refuge with Him, for " what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? "

And be not surprised if, as in the story of Mustapha, thine enemy the devil lies in wait for thee with increasing eagerness as thou dost approach the gates of salvation, and uses his every effort against thee as thy soul reaches out to Christ. For if he cannot entice thee into the paths of sin he will bend all his power to hinder thine entrance into the gate that God opens to thee in Christ, lest thou dost escape from his hand. Therefore does Christ say in His Holy Gospel, " Strive to enter in at the straight gate " : not that there is any hindrance from within, but because the devil will do his utmost from without to stop thy way.

And therefore there is no safety for thee if thou art almost persuaded to be a Christian, rather is that a place of terrible danger to thy soul. Fling theyself forward at the feet of Christ, Who stands ready to welcome thee, for it is only when He touches thee and bears thee into the shelter that His death has provided for thee,

that thou wilt be out of the grasp of the Evil One, and only as thou dost abide with Him Who is Prince and Saviour, canst thou abide in safety. And into this shelter may God bring thee, O my brother, and keep thee evermore.

C. Baldwin, Grosvener Printing Works, Tunbridge Wells.

فقال لهم يسوع ايضًا انا هو الباب
انجيل
I AM THE DOOR
John 10:9